

THE BEACON

A PAPER FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL
AND THE HOME



VOLUME III.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20, 1912

NUMBER 3

The Useless Prince.

BY ZELIA MARGARET WALTERS.

In Four Parts.

Part III.

When Ralfe awoke, Wish was sitting beside him, and it had grown dusk. He arose, sore in every joint, and with but one wish, to get away before the dragon returned. He hurried through the swamp with Wish close to his heels; and, when he came out on the plain again, he sank down, too weary to do anything but sleep. "I guess I am too young to fight a dragon," he said. "I wish I had obeyed Wisdom."

When he awoke in the morning, there was no table set at his elbow. He arose, groaning a little with pain, and looked about. After walking some distance, he found a tree of nuts; and he and Wish made a good breakfast from them. For several days he did not go far on his way. It took a great deal of time to hunt food. He found fruit and nuts and corn and potatoes. The corn and potatoes had to be cooked, and Ralfe fretted that it took so much of his time. But his hurts grew well. The work made him strong, and at length he set out, feeling even better than the day the gate closed behind him.

It was rather a lonely journey through the plain and forest, until he came to the mountain. Now and then he met a fellow-traveller; but their ways parted before long, and he was alone again. He came to the foot of the mountain at the close of a wearisome day, and he surveyed the steep slopes with misgiving. Nevertheless, when he had slept, he arose with a good heart, and tried the slope. He had not gone far when he came to a mighty boulder across the path he had taken, and had to turn back. All day he tried one way after another. Once he thought he had fairly got a start, when he stumbled and fell, rolling down the slope to the starting-place. So evening found him still at the foot of the mountain, and his courage had grown small. He slept again; and in the morning he sat and gazed, scarcely daring to try again. While he waited listlessly, an old woman came along the path, walking rapidly. When she saw him, she said, "Young sir, can you tell me the best path over the mountain?" She was a lovely old woman, who reminded him a little of his godmother, only the godmother was still young and strong, and this woman was very old and frail.

"I fear there is no path, good dame," he said.

"Fear never found a path, young sir. But necessity does, and necessity is my guide."

"Why must you cross the high and dangerous mountain?" asked Ralfe.



THE BALLOON—JULIEN DUPRÉ.

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Lift up Your Eyes.

The workers in this harvest field are being rested and helped. They are looking away from the ground. Their bent backs are straightened. They have raised their eyes toward the sky, where, far up, a balloon is sailing.

I wonder if the boy is thinking that some

day he will learn to use an airship, and fly far away from his work on the farm?

Man works with God when he conquers any part of the earth, or sea, or air. Those who cannot make a balloon, or learn to fly an aeroplane, may be refreshed at sight of one of these, because they have lifted their eyes unto the heavens.

"I have a young grand-daughter, who is the apple of my eye. She fell ill through a charm laid on her by a cruel witch. Then I learned that in yonder forest was a spring, the water of which would heal her. I crossed,—how, I can scarce remember,—and now I must go back, though I think this journey will be harder."

She felt in the bag she carried to make sure the bottle of spring water was all right, and then started up the mountain side. Ralfe, ashamed to see the frail little old woman starting alone, ran after her, and took her hand to help her up the steep places. They came to the boulder that had stopped him first. Here he helped the old woman to the top of it. Then he found a foothold, and she reached down a hand to help him, and soon he stood on the top. Here he saw that they had conquered the worst part of their path. It was still rough walking, but they could go on. The old woman was tireless. Sometimes she ran ahead of him in her eagerness. And then he would see her on a steep bit of path, and run to help her. At noon she bade him sit down, and she shared bread from her bag with him and the dog. Soon after this they came to the region of snow. Here the cold winds howled about them, and the snow covered the path. Ralfe looked at the old woman, and saw that she was getting blue with the cold and stumbling with numbness. He hesitated a moment. He was cold, too; and they wouldn't be in that disagreeable place if she had not been so determined. Then it seemed as if the face of the sick girl arose before him in reproach. He took off his mantle quickly, and wrapped it about the old woman. "I can run faster, and keep warm," he said boldly. Then, strange to say, the great wind went down, the snow ceased to blow in their eyes. Ralfe soon made out the path, and in a short time they had crossed the summit and were descending on the other side. As the old woman had told him, that side of the mountain was much easier. They reached the foot before it was dark, and slept on soft grass.

In the morning the old woman led Ralfe to her cottage. The neighbors, who were watching, said that the sick girl had neither moved nor spoken since the grandmother had left. But, when they held the water of the magic spring to her lips, the color came back to her white cheeks. She opened her eyes and smiled. Then, after she had taken a deeper draught, she sat up, and asked why the neighbors had come in. She was quite well, and could not even remember the cruel charm that had been laid upon her.

Every one thanked Ralfe many times, and the girl and grandmother begged him to stay; but he could not. When the next morning dawned, he took his sword and shield and set out. Only when he set out he said to the maiden, "When I have found my kingdom, I shall send for you and your grandmother to come and live at the palace."

And the maiden said she would come.

When he was clear of the forest where they lived, he could see his kingdom in the distance. The palace walls were shining like gold, and the towers seemed to beckon him to make haste. "I shall not turn aside for anything now," he said. "I have been long coming, and no doubt they need me there."

It looked like a straight path before him, and he hurried along, whistling so blithely that Wish leaped at his heels.

But, before the first day's journey was done, he came upon three little children sitting by the wayside and weeping bitterly.

"What is the matter?" he asked. "Are you hungry?" And he drew out some bread the old woman had given him.

They ate the bread, and the eldest told him their story. They had been playing in the fields when a dreadful giant rushed down upon them to carry them away. They had run into the forest and escaped him, but now they feared to go home because they would have to pass his door. Ralfe asked where their home was, and they pointed off away from the direction of his kingdom. He hesitated with a struggle in his heart.

"Please, good knight, take us home," begged the smallest child.

"I am not yet a knight," said Ralfe. "I am just a boy. But I will take you home. The godmother said my shield would defend me from anything, so I think I can save you from the giant."

So the four travelled back into the forest. And on the second day they drew near the giant's house. He was a dreadful old creature, who prowled about the countryside, picking up little children, and thrusting them into his dungeons, and making their parents pay all their wealth before he would release them. So, when he saw the three children coming, just with a larger boy, he rushed out upon them. Now Ralfe had not tried another battle since the day he attacked the dragon, and his heart beat heavily as he went to meet the giant. But the giant's great sword broke to pieces upon the small white shield, and a sweep of Ralfe's bright new sword cut off the wicked creature's head.

It seemed as if the whole forest were full of people in a few minutes. They came running from every side. They were parents whose children were in the dark dungeons. In another moment they had the keys, and had thrown every door in the old castle open, so that the rescued people began to pour out.

How they thanked Ralfe! They spread a feast on the village green, and carried him there in honor. And the old lord of the village, who had long mourned over the giant's cruelty, came down to meet the boy who had freed them. One of his men led a fine black horse as a gift. Ralfe's eyes grew bright when he saw it. He felt that now he was indeed almost a knight, since he could ride instead of trudging on foot. He was happy, too, that he had earned his horse, as he had earned the sword and shield. The village people begged Ralfe to stay; but he felt that he had already lost too much time, and he started again in the morning.

He rode along the forest path more light-hearted than ever. Surely, now he would soon reach that shining city that was his kingdom. At the first cross-roads a group of people came forward to meet him.

They were from another village farther in the forest. They had heard how he had freed their neighbors of the giant, and they begged him to come and free their village from a dragon that destroyed their crops, devoured their animals, and threatened their own lives. They knew that there was magic in the white shield, and that he would be able to deliver them where others had failed. But Ralfe was thinking only of his kingdom. "I cannot come," he told them. "Besides I cannot fight a dragon. I tried once, and I was left on the ground almost dead."

They pleaded, but in vain. He turned his horse the other way, and they went back, sadly, along the forest path.

He came out on the plain presently, and looked eagerly toward the east, where the

shining walls of the city should be. There was nothing there. He could see some trees and hills in the distance, but the walls and towers were gone.

(To be continued.)

The Leaves.

BY ARTHUR WALLACE BEACH.

The little brown leaves are tripping around,
Gayly around,
In a joyous, whirling dance,
While cheerily sound,
Merrily sound,
The nuts that down through the branches
glance.

The little brown leaves are sinking to sleep,
Softly to sleep,
Awaiting their covers of snow;
They wearily creep
Whisp'ring to sleep,
Soon to be safe when the cold winds blow.

The little brown leaves peacefully rest,
Tenderly rest,
All tucked in together they lie
Like birds in a nest,
A warm cosy nest,
And we say to each little brown leaf, good-bye.
Kindergarten Review.

Little Lights.

Sometimes children think they are too small to do any good: they must wait until they are grown up, or at least until they are as big as the older brother or sister.

I read something the other day that made me think the smallest might be helpful.

Did you ever see a glow-worm? Perhaps not, but it is a little worm about half an inch long, which shines with a little light, as fire-flies do. I dare say you have seen fire-flies some evening when you happened to be riding in the country. What I read the other day was about the good one of these little glow-worms did.

There had been a battle, and some of the men were fleeing from the enemy. Pretty soon they lost their way. They had with them a little instrument called a compass, which would have shown them the way, only it was so dark they could not see which way the needle pointed. They did not carry a light for fear the enemy would see it and follow them. Just then one of the men noticed a little glow-worm shining in the grass. He picked it up and put it on the compass, and there was just light enough to show which way the needle pointed. Then the men knew which way their home was. They were very glad, and went on until they got home.

Don't you think these men thought a little glow-worm could do good? And cannot a little child do as much as a glow-worm?

Bright, sunny smiles, pleasant words, and helpful deeds are a child's way of shining, and they make all the household happy.

Keep Busy.

Along the path of a useful life
Will heart's-ease ever bloom;
The busy mind has no time to think
Of sorrow, or care, or gloom;
And anxious thoughts may be swept away.
As we busily wield a broom.

LOUISA M. ALCOTT.



Courtesy of "Our Fourfooted Friends."

A WELL-EARNED REST.

Pinkie's Way.

BY HARRIETTE WILBUR.

Jimpsy gripped his fist and ran as hard as he could. Two thoughts filled his mind: he mustn't lose his new ball, and he mustn't miss the excursion. So he pushed the ball deep into a coat pocket and went flying down alleys, dodging between buildings, and kitty-cornering vacant lots until he came in sight of the *Herald* office. And then he ran harder than ever, anxious to be one of that crowding, shouting throng of "newsies."

"Hi, Jimpsy!" called Blackie White, as Jimpsy panted up to the edge of the crowd. "Get your ticket! Pinkie's giving them out now!"

Blackie held up a small piece of yellow cardboard, and Jimpsy read at a glance the familiar words:—

THE DULUTH EVENING HERALD
NEWSBOYS' EXCURSION
ADMIT ONE

He crowded in among the pushing, scrambling mob. It was some time before he could reach the circulation manager and secure his card; but, elbowing and kneeling those near him, and stepping on feet that were in the way and dodging in wherever he saw the smallest opening, and glaring and scowling at whoever elbowed and kneed and pushed him, and getting stepped on and glared at himself, he at last came out with the ticket.

"Hi, Blackie!" he shouted, "come out here!" and he ran down the street to a place where the crowd was not so great. "Get off a ways, and I'll give you a catch!" he commanded proudly, after the surprised Blackie had examined the ball well and pronounced it a hummer.

Blackie started off on a run, faced about, squatted, cupped his hands, and Jimpsy let the ball fly. It sailed away in a long, smooth curve, and Blackie started to run backward to catch it. Suddenly he bumped

into Izzy Polinsky, and down both boys went with a crash. Jimpsy, keeping his eyes on his precious ball, saw it drop and roll along the curb-stone. And just then a stray dog that had been following a delivery wagon saw the ball, and started for it.

Jimpsy ran and shouted, but the dog was ready for sport: he caught the ball in his mouth and ran off down the street.

"Catch him! Catch him!" cried Jimpsy in agony of fear of losing his ball, and he flew as fast as his short legs would carry him.

"Stop him! Head him off!" shouted Blackie and Izzy, and they, too, set off in full chase.

The dog ran for a few yards; but some of the mob of newsies had seen the trouble, and spread out into the street to head the dog off. He dodged this way and that; headed off in one direction, he slipped between a pair of legs and around another pair; headed off again, he turned about completely, but was finally cornered. By the time Jimpsy came up, puffing and anxious, there were so many newsies gathered about the dog that he could see nothing at all of him. But soon, by stooping and crowding and wedging his way, he was able to catch short glimpses of several boys trying to wrench his treasure away from the dog's set jaws. They pulled and twisted the ball, they pulled and twisted the dog's mouth, but without success. He evidently thought it a game, and was going to play his part.

And now from the direction of the *Herald* office came the blare of horns and drums, and then Pinkie's loud voice commanding: "Everybody line up by twos. Time to start!"

Jimpsy was almost ready to cry. He would lose the ball now, or the excursion would go on without him. Already the boys were breaking away all about him, and starting for the line-up out in the middle of the street. The band struck up a gay march, and soon but a few friends remained to help

Jimpsy. Then it was that Pinkie came hurrying up.

"Here, what you fellows scrapping about?" he asked.

Jimpsy and Blackie and Izzy were all tugging frantically at the ball, and belaboring the dog over the head with hard fists.

"There, boys, don't hurt the dog. That's no way to get the ball," said Pinkie. "If you fellows used your brains more, you'd save your fists a lot. Here, Blackie, run over to that butcher shop and get a piece of dog-meat."

Blackie was off like a flash, and back in a minute with a large piece of red raw meat. It was no sooner dangled before the dog's nose than he dropped the ball, snapped the meat, and was off down the street.

Such a shout as went up from the long line that had been watching the plan!

"Hurray for Pinkie!" they cried again and again, and waved their caps.

None shouted louder than Jimpsy. Even after he fell in with Blackie at the very end of the line, his rescued treasure buried deep in his pocket, he kept up a happy little "Hip! hip! hurray!" to himself in time to the march, until he came in sight of the dock and saw the "Newsboy," flags flying and whistles blowing, waiting for its happy crowd.

Practising.

I just pretend my fingers walk

Down pretty, polished stairs,
To a black hole so cold and deep,
Quite full of angry bears.

And then 'way up to where it's light

My frightened fingers run,
And very soon it's twelve o'clock,
The horrid scales are done.

HELEN HAY WHITNEY, in *The Continent*.

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ISSUED WEEKLY FROM THE FIRST SUNDAY OF OCTOBER
TO THE FIRST SUNDAY OF JUNE, INCLUSIVE.

Subscription price, twenty-five cents a year.

Entered at the Boston Post-office as second-class mail
matter.

PUBLISHED BY THE

AMERICAN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

25 Beacon Street, Boston.

GEO. H. ELLIS CO., PRINTERS, BOSTON

Our New Editor.

With this issue, a new editor takes charge of *The Beacon*. The President of the Unitarian Sunday School Society has, so far, been nominally responsible for its conduct, but his secretary, Miss Marie W. Johnson, has done nearly all the work, and to her its success is primarily due. Rev. Florence Buck now becomes the editor, having resigned as minister of the Unitarian church in Alameda, Cal., and crossed the continent to serve our young people in this and other ways. She has plans for *The Beacon* that will make it better than ever. Let us all take hold with her in this good work.

Editorial.

The new editor greets the children in our Sunday schools from Maine to California and from Canada to Scotland. Some of them are already her friends. All the rest she hopes in time to make her friends.

A minister in California told his Sunday school that Miss Buck was soon to go East to do some work for the children of our churches through this paper and in other ways. One six-year-old girl in the school ran home with this message: "O mamma! What do you think! Miss Buck is going to Boston to write stories for *The Beacon* for me."

Barbara was right. There will be a story for her in due time. We who love this paper and work for it are writing for each one of its eleven thousand readers. We write for other children who do not yet read our words, but who will some day. Mr. Lawrence and Dr. Starbuck and Miss Johnson and all the contributors are working for you. We want you to enjoy the paper, and to learn from it to be loyal to your own church and Sunday school, and to the great things for which they stand.

Some story here printed will make you want to have courage in face of danger. Another will help you to see how to be quite honest and true. Sometimes you will read one which will tell you of the wonderful things in nature, and so deepen your love for this good world which God gives us. You will read of the work of men and women like Wilbur Wright inventing his airships, and Jane Addams, in her work at Hull House, and Dr. Grenfell on the Labrador coast, and you will want to do some great work, to live a life of service. Perhaps some one sentence that you read will suddenly make the unseen, divine things more real to you. When that happens, you are to know that the story or the poem or the sentence has reached the very one for whom it was meant. Then you may say to yourself, "That was for me."

The Way it was with Joe.

BY F. H. SWEET.

Joe was out under the Baldwin tree, at the far end of the orchard. But, instead of gathering apples, as he had been told, he was sitting astride one of the lower limbs, kicking his feet viciously against the trunk. A half-bushel basket lay on the ground where he had thrown it.

And why? Because he had been disobedient the day before, and in consequence was to pick apples to-day and look out for the farm, while all the others were going to see the traveling menagerie at the town, five miles away. Joe did not mind the punishment so much, for he was used to it, and he knew that in this case it was just. But why could they not have put the punishment off another day, and let him go to the menagerie? So he kicked the tree.

The Baldwin was near the line fence, and just across on the other side were the woods, with two or three large walnut trees so near the fence that some of their branches spread across to the orchard. Up in the tree and scampering over the ground were a number of squirrels intent upon gathering their winter stores. Joe watched them unobtrusively, the scowl dark upon his face. At first the little animals had looked at him apprehensively, but, after he had been there fifteen or twenty minutes, they seemed to forget his presence entirely.

Often all of them would be in the tree at the same time, gnawing industriously at the walnuts, which they would send rattling down among the leaves. Then they would scamper down the trunk, and perhaps across the fence to the orchard side, gather up the nuts in their capacious cheek pouches, and skurry away to their storehouses.

Presently, a little chipmunk made a mistake, either accidentally or by design; for he ran into the orchard and picked up a big walnut that a gray squirrel had just gnawed from a branch overhead. Joe had been watching the squirrel, and had seen the nut fall. So, as he saw him hurry down the trunk and across into the orchard to where the nut had fallen, his eyes began to brighten. There was a fine prospect for a row, and he was in just the mood for a row.

Evidently the chipmunk expected trouble, too; for he at once squared off as if to fight, then seemed to think better of it, and tried to sneak away.

But the gray only looked at him for a moment, chattered something, as though to say, "That's all right, little fellow. Run along." Then the gray went back to the tree, and up the trunk, to gnaw off more walnuts.

Joe sniffed with disappointment. He wouldn't have acted like that, he thought contemptuously. No thieving or mischievous squirrel would have carried off his walnut.

But the incident set him to thinking. His own case was similar, only he had severely punished the younger brother who playfully snatched up some of his belongings. The chipmunk was now back from his storehouse, and the gray was chattering affably to him from the branches. Was that better than his own way, which had ended in his losing the menagerie?

Joe was not one to yield easily, however, even to his own convictions. He remained on the branch another half hour. Then he dropped down quickly, and set industriously to work, gathering up apples.

RECREATION CORNER.

ENIGMA V.

I am composed of 10 letters.

My 3, 9, 5, 1, 7, is a guardian spirit.

My 4, 3, 8, 7, is used by a carpenter.

My 1, 2, 3, is a girl's name.

My 7, 10, 2, 6, 7, is to make smooth.

My 5, 8, 2, 6, is to present.

My whole is a poem of Longfellow.

IRMA STERNEBERG.

ENIGMA VI.

I am composed of 9 letters.

My 1, 2, 3, is not old.

My 4, 5, 3, is the call of an animal.

My 9, 6, 2, 1, are beasts of burden.

My 8, 9, 3, is a useful animal.

My 4, 7, 8, 5, are a pest.

My whole is one of the United States.

GERTRUDE SHAW.

HIDDEN FRUITS.

1. Grandma is taking a nap: please be quiet, boys.
2. Your impatience, or anger, was very wrong.
3. The dog, Fifi, gladly ran to his master.
4. I said, "Meg, rap ever so loud, and perhaps some one will come."
5. The stores were full of people: money seemed to be plenty.
6. One would as soon expect to find on the island of Capri, cotton growing.
7. Why, Jane Belcher! rye is very wholesome.
8. This hail-stone is as large as a pea, Charles.
9. Scrape a raw apple into the beaten egg.
10. I am mad at Edward, he is so mean.
11. Said Robert, "Anger in every one is bad."
12. She passed me her cup: "lump number two, please."

W. J.

A PUZZLE.

Write four 9's to equal 100.

E. S. C.

CHANGED INITIALS.

I am composed of four letters and am a term of endearment.

Change my head and I am timidity.

Again, and I am a wild animal.

Again, and I am close to.

Again, and I am behind.

Again, and I listen.

Again, and I am a fruit.

Again, and I am a period of time.

The Myrtle.

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES IN NO. 1.

ENIGMA I.—Statue of Liberty.

ENIGMA II.—The Birds of Killingworth.

A CHARADE.—Caravan.

WORD-BUILDING.—Yellow.

The Dog's Telephone Message.

One morning, not long ago, my sister went to see a friend who lived a mile or so from the rectory, taking with her our little brown cocker-spaniel. When she left, she quite forgot the dog, and, as soon as our friends discovered him, they did all they could to make him leave, but with no avail. Some hours passed, and he was still there. So they telephoned to let us know his whereabouts. "Bring him to the telephone," said my sister. One of the boys held him, while another put the trumpet to the dog's ear. Then my sister whistled, and called, "Come home at once, Paddy." Immediately he wriggled out of the boy's arms, rushed at the door, barking to get out, and shortly afterwards arrived, panting, at the rectory.—*The Spectator*.